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Extension Service - War Food Administration

U.S. DEPT OF AGRICULTURE
CURRENT

WARTIME EXTENSION WORK

SUMMARY OF EXTENSION WORK, TECHNIQUES, AND RESULTS BASED ON STATE REPORTS

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Emphasis in this week's summary is on food-production programs for 1944; farm labor; 4-H Club work; and farm forestry.

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NORTH DAKOTA
March 4, 1944

Food production.-County agents are holding local meetings in every community to give farm people production information on crops and livestock. Diseases and insect control, and labor- and time-saving farm equipment are emphasized. Aim of extension educational program is to provide latest available help on improved methods for expanding and maintaining production, in spite of labor and equipment handicaps. Farmers are urged to plant maximum acreages of wheat, flax, and feed. Better feeding methods for dairy cattle, livestock, and poultry; reduction of beef herds and poultry flocks to fit facilities and feed supplies; use of only adapted, high-producing crop varieties; and seed treatment, are high lights of campaign.

County agents and State field agents report unusual interest of farmers in meetings now under way. Even under unfavorable weather and road conditions attendance has been high. Meetings are held at key points in each community. Subject-matter training meetings were held earlier in winter to prepare agents for giving latest and best production information.

Publications are being used widely to carry information direct to farm families. Several new circulars and posters have been prepared, and further use is being made of others available. New materials being distributed include Grow More Food in 1944 -- folder carrying condensed recommendations of Extension Service; Grow Better Oats, for producers in eastern part of State; circular for potato growers giving new information; poster on garden problems.

Farm labor.-Organization and plans for 1944 farm labor program are ready to function when field operations begin. Cooperation with War Manpower Commission employment service is being continued on same basis as in 1943. Increased emphasis is placed on development of labor-saving equipment on farms, and on neighborhood cooperation and exchange of labor.

Victory Gardens.-Earlier start on educational work has been made this year than last. Drive is under way to increase gardens 10 percent over 1943 and to encourage each gardener to produce 25-percent larger garden. Garden demonstrators are being enrolled in a number of counties. Early seed buying is emphasized. Urban communities are receiving increased attention with view to better local arrangements for garden space and encouragement of gardening. Cooperation with State League of Municipalities will be continued and further developed this year. Extensive publicity is being used to promote garden effort.

8-point dairy program.-State-wide cooperation of creamery operators and dairy interests has been enlisted. County meetings with dairymen and extension agents have been held for setting up county effort. Dairy program for State has been set up and approved by State dairy committee. Educational drive places stress on better feeding of cows, growing and proper handling of needed feeds, milking of as many cows as labor supply permits.

Farm forestry.-Effort is being made to obtain wider use of farm-produced wood resources. Publicity is given to need for effective use of farm wood lots, and how they have been handled profitably on some farms. North Dakota is not heavily wooded, but in many areas good use is now being made of local wood supplies. Attention is given to treatment of less valuable woods for fence posts and other uses. Planting of tree windbreaks and wood lots is encouraged through educational demonstrations and assistance on planting problems.

4-H Clubs.-Sharp increase in club organizations and enrollments, and greater emphasis on role of 4-H members in war effort, are planned. Several counties expect to double 4-H work. Possible increase of one-third for State is indicated. 4-H mobilization period is marked with increased organization and enrollment.

Insect problems.-Information on prospective 1944 grasshopper infestation and probable effect on crop production has been released. In infested sections county control operations are being set up where necessary. Campaign is under way to control cattle grubs, educational work being aimed at acquainting farmers in infested areas with damage to hides and meat production caused by pests. Control demonstrations are being organized in areas most heavily infested. Work is also being carried on against lice on livestock and poultry, worms and internal parasites of sheep and other livestock.

Home food supply.-Educational activities in food preservation, storage, and conservation have been organized, and meetings arranged with homemakers. Equipment needs for adequate handling of garden and farm food supplies are stressed. Several new circulars have been prepared -- on soybeans for human food, "no point - low point foods," and 1944 family food plan.

VIRGINIA
February 1, 1944

Farm labor.-January was devoted largely to planning and partly organizing emergency farm labor program. Preliminary estimates were made of number of workers and camps. Farm labor survey was started through neighborhood leaders to obtain most accurate information available.

Reporting on recent study, work utilization committee recommended each extension department study its particular field and suggest list of labor-saving methods, to be publicized and relayed to extension workers. Committee also recommended special research be done on ways to save time and labor in making hay.

Victory Gardens. - During month 53 meetings on gardening had total attendance of 1,491. Twenty-four were leader-training meetings, attended by 303 garden leaders from home demonstration clubs. Assuming average membership of 20 per club, garden leaders if they function as expected will reach more than 6,000 farm women. Work of these leaders should reduce amount of time required of specialists and take information to larger number of people.

Field crops. - Crop goals for Virginia and suggestions for meeting them were discussed by extension agronomists at county food-production goal meetings throughout State. Outline for all meetings, Suggestions for Meeting the 1944 Crop Goals, was prepared and was furnished also to county agents and fertilizer manufacturers.

List of corn hybrids recommended for Virginia by experiment station has been distributed to all county agents and professional workers.

In conjunction with dairy specialists, agronomist helped prepare material for representatives of dairy industry on 8-point milk production program. Material was prepared on growing of high-quality hay crops, dependable high-quality pasturage, good-quality silage crops, and efficient growing of feed grains.

Farm forestry. - Program to increase winter farm production of pulpwood has been successful in eastern Virginia. All pulp plants in that section now have larger inventory of wood than at any other time since we became actively involved in war. Record in western part of State is not quite so good. Though most plants have kept running, they have not been able to build large enough reserve to carry them through slump that will follow opening of spring plowing and planting season. To promote increased production, Extension cooperated actively with other public agencies and with industries concerned. Weather was favorable for program.

Poultry. - During January, 25 leader-training meetings were held with attendance of 245. Agricultural goals were discussed at 8 meetings attended by 377 persons. Poultry specialists held 17 additional adult meetings attended by 535, and 15 4-H Club meetings with attendance of 344. In meetings and visits, suggestions were made for management practices to help meet year's poultry goals.

Livestock production. - Two animal husbandry specialists attended 15 food-production goals meetings, throughout State, with audience of 943 agricultural workers and farmers. Material was prepared on meeting 1944 goals, and work done with Virginia Swine Breeders' Association, Richmond Cattlemen's Association, and on selection of breeding cattle for State breeders.

Negro extension activities. - Local agents have worked diligently to keep hog cholera under control in a number of counties where it has been prevalent. In Sussex County, 533 hogs were treated; Dinwiddie, 257 hogs treated; and in Lunenburg, 1,123 hogs were inoculated against cholera and 326 treated for worms. In 9 other counties 1,648 hogs were treated.

Negro agents are promoting Food Fights for Freedom program. In Caroline County, as result of emphasis placed on storage of foods produced this year, more farmers have stored food in outdoor pits. In two communities -- File and St. John -- three cellars were repaired and used for storage. In Henrico County, three community clubs held mass meetings concerning FFFF program, with attendance of 225 farm families, to discuss producing, conserving, rationing, and price control as applied to rural families.

In food-conservation program, one whole beef was canned under supervision of Greensville County negro agent. From this beef, 300 pints of steaks, hamburger, stew, and potted meat were canned. Twenty-five persons took part in job, under auspices of Powell Canning Club. One family was helped in killing two large hogs and canning liver, sausage, and pork chops. Four demonstrations were conducted in King and Queen County to teach women how to can and preserve meat instead of trying to use it all fresh. Poultry culling was also demonstrated at these meetings.

In Nansemond County, agent met neighborhood leaders at five meeting places to collect extension information leading to more effective program in 1944.

Negro farm people showed greatest interest in discussions of food and more war supplies for this year. Outstanding problems were shortage of farm machinery and feed concentrates for poultry and hogs.

Colored citizens contributed \$708.22 War Fund drive in Isle of Wight County in response to appeals made in churches, organizations, and individual solicitations. "We feel proud in having assisted in such a worth-while effort," reports negro extension agent.